

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL USSCC GENEVA

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1301

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,PARM,NATO,EG,UR

SUBJECT: AXEN-FISCHER VISIT TO MOSCOW

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

REF: A. USBERLIN 151 B. PARIS 02336

1. SOVIET PRESS ACCOUNTS OF JANUARY 27-28 MOSCOW VISIT

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OF GDR PARTY POLITBURO MEMBER AND SECRETARY AXEN AND FOREIGN

MINISTER FISCHER ARE LESS INFORMATIVE THAN THOSE ON POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER OLSZOWSKI'S VISIT THE WEEK BEFORE. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT AXEN AND CPSU SECRETARY KATUSHEV, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE ATTENDED PREPARATORY MEETINGS FOR THE FORTHCOMING EUROPEAN CP CONFERENCE, CONFERRED ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE. THE UNUSUALLY HEAVY EMPHASIS THE PRAVDA ACCOUNT (JANUARY 29) GIVES TO STRENGTHENING THE SOCIALIST COMMONWEALTH ALSO SUGGESTS THAT PROBLEMS OF THE MOVEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION TOPIC. PLANNING FOR THE WARSAW PACT ANNIVERSARY IN MAY MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN AN AGENDA ITEM. BESIDES THE INEVITABLE DISCUSSION OF BERLIN AND GERMAN QUESTIONS, PLANS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY LAID FOR CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY (PRAVDA SAID THIS WAS A DISCUSSION ITEM). IN ADDITION, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT, CONSIDERING THE TIMING, MBFR AND CSCE WERE DISCUSSED, THROUGH, IN CONTRAST TO THE OLSZOWSKI VISIT, THERE WAS NO PRESS REFERENCE TO THE NEWLY RESUMED NEGOTIATIONS.

2. THE PRAVDA REPORT CLAIMS THE USUAL FULL UNITY OF VIEWS. HOWEVER, GROMYKO, IN HIS DINNER TOAST, DESCRIBED THE DISCUSSIONS AS BEING "FRANK" AS WELL AS "BUSINESSLIKE" AND "CONSTRUCTIVE." THE APPARENTLY SUDDEN RECALL FOR THE TALKS OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR YEFREMOV LENDS SOME ADDITIONAL WEIGHT TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE TALKS MAY HAVE BEEN ARRANGED AT THE LAST MINUTE AND MAY THEREFORE HAVE INVOLVED SOME KIND OF SOVIET-GDR BILATERAL PROBLEM. INCIDENTALLY, YEFREMOV'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TALKS MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THEY--AND NOT A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING--WERE THE CAUSE OF HIS RETURN TO MOSCOW.

3. THE SOVIET PRESS, BY SUMMARIZING THE GROMYKO-FISCHER TOASTS, GAVE THE NEW GDR FOREIGN MINISTER MORE PLAY THAN HIS SENIOR COLLEAGUE AXEN. THIS EMPHASIS WOULD APPEAR TO BE IN LINE WITH A SOVIET DESIRE TO PLAY DOWN THE PARTY ASPECTS OF THE VISIT.

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